



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10

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OFFICE OF  
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

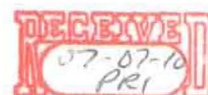
June 30, 2010

James H. Lecky, Director  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Lecky,

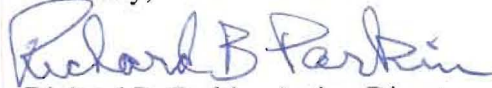
Thank you for extending an invitation to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 10, to participate as a NEPA cooperating agency for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Arctic Seismic and Exploration Activities Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). For EPA, participation as a formal cooperating agency generally commands a high priority and commitment of Regional program staff resources that is above and beyond our early and routine involvement. Unfortunately, we are not able to commit staff resources at a level to support involvement as a cooperating agency at this time. We also have limited special expertise regarding impacts of exploratory activities on marine mammals, particularly compared to the expertise in your agency. Therefore, EPA declines to participate as a formal cooperating agency.

However, we would like to remain actively engaged and involved with the project as the EIS progresses. Because we believe this project warrants our active involvement to the extent our resources allow, we have provided input in the past and plan to continue. Previously we provided detailed scoping comments along with EPA resource documents that we believe will help inform the EIS. In addition, we had a meeting in Anchorage with Mike Payne (EIS Project Manager) and Brad Smith (NMFS Protected Resources-Anchorage) to discuss EPA's regulatory role and activities in the Arctic. Our intent is to remain actively involved in future activities of the project to the maximum extent possible. We anticipate this work will include the opportunity to review and comment on baseline studies as well as the preliminary draft EIS. In addition, we intend to review and comment on the draft and final EISs under our Clean Air Act Section 309 review authority.



Please contact Jennifer Curtis of my staff at (907) 271-6324 or [curtis.jennifer@epa.gov](mailto:curtis.jennifer@epa.gov) to further discuss EPA participation. In particular, we are very interested in identifying potential information needs for our Ocean Discharge Criterion Evaluation (ODCE) that can be met at least in part through this EIS process. We look forward to continuing our work with your agency on this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard B. Parkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" and last name "Parkin" clearly legible.

Richard B. Parkin, Acting Director  
Office of Ecosystems, Tribal and Public Affairs